

REPORT

TO THE



BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

For the Year 1965

BY

J. M. McEWAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health

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STAFF :

Medical Officer of Health :

J. M. McEWAN, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor :

S. CLOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector :

E. B. MILLER, C.R.S.H.

Mrs. J. FULLERTON : *Clerk/Typist*

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COUNCIL OFFICES, BELLINGHAM.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council
of Bellingham :*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1965.

Such a large and sparsely populated Rural District as Bellingham presents many problems, but the Council have an excellent record in providing modern amenities wherever this is possible at reasonable cost. Unfortunately that limit appears to have been almost reached, and each Annual Report can be expected to describe only minor improvements. The economy is typically rural, with agriculture and forestry as the main industries, but the Army camp at Otterburn and the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company provide useful employment. The slow depopulation of the area continues, but the births again outnumber the deaths, and the loss of population is in young adults, leaving an unduly high proportion of children and old people. It will be a difficult problem to find industries willing to come into the District on account of its poor communications and small available labour force, but the Planning Committee of Northumberland County Council are taking preliminary steps to assess the possibility of new industry in Bellingham. In this lies the best hope of retaining young people.

The vital statistics for 1965 give every cause for satisfaction. The birth rate and death rate compare favourably with the national average, and there were no deaths in infancy. Almost two thirds of the deaths were due to diseases of the heart or circulation, and almost half the deaths occurred in people over 75. The incidence of lung cancer as a cause of death is much below the expected rate, and respiratory disease was responsible for only three deaths. Whatever the disadvantages of living in this Rural District, the expectation of life and good health are high.

Few cases of infectious disease were notified during the year except for measles, which accounted for 67 of the 69 notifications and for one death. No case of tuberculosis was notified. The absence of the more serious infectious diseases is due in part to better living conditions, but mainly to the programme of immunisation carried out at the clinics and by family doctors and so widely accepted by parents.

No further extension of mains water was made during the year. The Ridsdale sewerage and sewage disposal scheme is almost complete and only a few small communities remain to be provided with modern sewage schemes. The more isolated holdings rely on septic tanks, and there remain some 80 privies, although the number is decreasing as improvements are carried out with grant assistance. The Council have approved the principle of charging for farm effluent accepted for treatment in their works. It can be said that the arrangements for water and sewage disposal in the area are adequate.

The scavenging of so large a District has never been easy and labour difficulties have recently added to the problem. Some 70% of properties are scavenged at intervals of from one week in the case of the larger communities to four weeks in the smaller, together with premises within some half mile of the highway. As with the other public services such as mains water and sewage disposal, cost is the factor that limits extension, however desirable expansion may be.

By the end of the year, the construction of 28 houses for the Council in Bellingham, was about to begin. 14 will be family houses of the usual type, while the rest will be two bedroom bungalows to meet the needs of couples with small families as well as being suitable for old people. No Council houses are planned elsewhere at present. The Forestry Commission have, however, informed the Council that they propose to build an additional 200 to 300 houses by 1986. The reconditioning of old houses is of particular value in a rural area and is encouraged by the ready availability of improvement grants.

The Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company, as statutory water undertakers, provide a supply that is satisfactory in quality and quantity, and covers most of the District. Routine samples from the supply are taken by the Company, who take any necessary remedial action. Proposed and private supplies remain the responsibility of the Health Department, and 22 samples were taken during the year. First results are not always satisfactory, and help and advice is given to bring the supply up to the necessary standard. No chemical examination was carried out during the year by the Council, but detailed analyses by the Company over the years have shown that plumbo-solvency is not a problem, but that the

fluoride content is low at 0.1—0.2 parts per million. The information required as to the number of houses in each parish supplied from public water mains is tabulated later in the Report.

There is no common lodging house in the Rural District.

The Chairman and Members of the Health Committee have taken an active interest in the work of the Department, and my thanks are due to them and to the Clerk and other Officers. The staff of the Health Department continue to give efficient service.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. M. McEWAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

VITAL STATISTICS

Population

The Population estimated at 30th June, 1965, was 5,190, a decrease of 60 on the previous year.

Death Rate

47 deaths were registered during 1965, giving a death rate of 10.05 per 1,000 population. The figure for England and Wales is 11.5 per 1,000.

Birth Rate

There were 66 live births during the year, and when an adjustment factor is applied this gives a birth rate of 15.26 per 1,000 population. This is to be compared with the national figure of 18.1 per 1,000.

With no still births, the still birth rate is Nil per 1,000 births, compared with 15.7 per 1,000 for England and Wales.

Infant Mortality

No infant died under the age of one year, giving an infant mortality rate of Nil per 1,000 live births, compared with the national rate of 19.0 per 1,000.

Live births	..	..	..	..	..	66
Rate per 1,000 population	..	..	..	..	..	15.26
(England & Wales 18.1 per 1,000)						
Illegitimate live births	..	..	..	..	..	3
Per cent of total live births	..	..	..	..	..	4.5
Still births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Rate per 1,000 live and still births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(England & Wales 15.7 per 1,000)						
Total live and still births	..	..	..	..	..	66
Infant deaths (under one year)	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(England & Wales 19.0 per 1,000)						
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Neo-natal mortality rate deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births	..	..	..	..	..	Nil

Early neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	Nil
Perinatal mortality rate (still births and deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live and still births)	Nil
Maternal mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births	Nil

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Measles

69 Cases were notified.

Erysipelas, Scarlet Fever

One case of each was notified.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

The area of the Bellingham Rural District is 246,645 acres.

The estimated population for 1965 is 5,190.

The number of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1965, was 1,753 of which 205 are owned by the Local Authority.

The sum represented by a penny rate is £640.

The rateable value is £163,989.

HEALTH SERVICES

Laboratory Facilities

Facilities in the area continue to be provided by the Public Health Laboratory in Newcastle General Hospital, which gives an efficient service.

Ambulance Service

The local ambulance service is provided for the County Council by the Red Cross, and a satisfactory service is maintained. In addition to the ambulance, a car service is available for suitable cases and is of considerable value in such a large district. Since the passenger train service was discontinued much extra mileage has been run to allow

patients to keep hospital appointments and to allow mothers and children to attend clinics, but the use of the service appears to have stabilised now.

Since 1961 a call house has been established at the British Red Cross Society ambulance depot in Bellingham, at which requests for the ambulance car service are received.

Home Nursing and Health Visiting

The district nurses are all provided with cars and their nursing work continues to be excellent. In spite of the difficulty of arranging for suitable help in a country district, the Home Help Service run by the County Council continues to function satisfactorily. The County Health Visitors work in harmony with the General Practitioners in the area and do much valuable work.

Maternity and Child Welfare

Five Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, staffed by the County Council, operate at Bellingham, Otterburn, Byrness, Kielder and Wark. Immunisation against diphtheria is carried out at these centres or is done by the General Practitioner, while all vaccination is carried out by the General Practitioners.

TABLE 1.

The following table shows the principal statistics for the years 1961—1965.

Year	Live Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	General Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births
1961	17.37	12.75	35.7
1962	16.02	11.15	11.5
1963	19.01	12.06	29.7
1964	20.34	9.81	12.58
1965	15.26	10.05	Nil.

ANNUAL RETURNS OF FOOD POISONING NOTIFICATIONS, YEAR 1965

Food Poisoning Notifications Returned to Registrar General

					TOTAL
Outbreaks due to identified agents	..	..	..	..	Nil
Outbreaks of undiscovered cause	..	..	..	..	Nil
Single Cases :					
Agent identified	..	..	..	..	Nil
Unknown cause	..	..	..	..	Nil
Total	..	..	..	..	Nil

TABLE II.

Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1965 :—

Notifiable Disease	Males.	Females	Totals
Scarlet Fever.. ..	—	1	1
Whooping Cough	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—
Measles	31	38	69
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Acute Pneumonia	—	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—
Smallpox	—	—	—
Acute Encephalitis	—	—	—
Enteric or Typhoid Fevers	—	—	—
Erysipelas	1	—	1
Meningococcal Infection	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—
Tuberculosis	—	—	—
Totals	32	39	71

TABLE III.
TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality during 1965 :—

Age Periods	New Cases				Nett Deaths in Bellingham Rural District			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE IV

The following table classifies deaths according to their age groups :—

Age Groups	Males	Females	Totals.
under 4 weeks ..	—	—	—
4 weeks to 1 year	—	—	—
1 to 4 years ..	—	—	—
5—14	1	—	1
15—24	—	—	—
25—34	1	—	1
35—44	1	—	1
45—54	—	—	—
55—64	8	4	2
65—74	6	4	10
75 and over.. ..	10	12	22

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS BY CAUSES

According to Registrar General's Classification.

Causes of Death	1964		1965	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory ..	—	—	—	—
2. Tuberculosis, other ..	—	—	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease ..	—	—	—	—
4. Diphtheria	—	—	—	—
5. Whooping Cough ..	—	—	—	—
6. Meningococcal infections ..	—	—	—	—
7. Acute Poliomyelitis ..	—	—	—	—
8. Measles	—	—	1	—
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	—	—	—
10. Malignant Neoplasm— Stomach ..	2	—	—	—
11. do. Lung and Bronchus ..	1	—	1	—
12. do. Breast ..	—	1	—	—
13. do. Uterus ..	—	—	—	2
14. Other malignant and Lymphatic neoplasms ..	3	1	3	—
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia ..	—	—	—	1
16. Diabetes	—	—	—	—
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	3	1	6	2
18. Coronary Disease, Angina..	10	4	8	9
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	—	—	—
20. Other heart disease ..	—	4	1	2
21. Other circulatory disease ..	4	2	1	1
22. Influenza	—	—	—	—
23. Pneumonia	1	—	—	—
24. Bronchitis	2	2	1	1
25. Other diseases of respira- tory system	—	—	—	1
26. Ulcer of Stomach & duo- denum	1	—	1	—
27. Gastritis, Enteritis, Diarr- hoea	—	—	—	—
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis ..	—	—	—	—
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate ..	—	—	1	—
30. Pregnancy, Child Birth, Abortion	—	—	—	—
31. Congenital Malformations..	—	1	—	—
32. Other defined and ill- defined diseases ..	—	—	1	1
33. Motor Vehicle accidents ..	—	—	2	—
34. All other accidents.. ..	1	—	—	—
35. Suicide	1	—	—	—
36. Homicide and operations of war	—	—	—	—
	30	16	27	20
	46		47	

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1965

This year's work reveals continued progress in the field of environmental hygiene, consequent upon the installation of basic services of water and sewerage in the main settlement groups throughout a wide and scattered rural area.

WATER

The position at the time of this report, since the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company, under the Water Order of 1951, became the statutory water undertaker covering this area, is as follows :

Number of dwellings supplied from public mains :

<i>Parish</i>	<i>No. of Properties</i>	<i>Properties</i>
Bellingham	335	1,169
Tarset	54	180
Falstone	30	105
Wark	204	709
Otterburn	106	336
Rochester (including Byrness)	76	258
Woodburn	158	518
Kirkwhelpington	69	223
Birtley	38	127
Forestry Commission private supply to Kielder ..	126	441
Reedsmouth	18	59

Samples

This is referred to in the Medical Officer of Health's section. Where analyses have proved unsatisfactory, follow-up samples have been taken and technical advice given on problems arising from collection and storage of private sources of supply.

During the year some 22 samples were taken from private sources of supply :

			<i>Coliform bacilli</i>	<i>Bact. coli (type 1)</i>
3 samples	..	..	0	0
1 sample	..	..	1	0
1 „	..	..	3	0
1 „	..	..	1	1
1 „	..	..	3	1
2 samples	..	..	5	5
1 sample	..	..	8	0
2 samples	..	..	8	8
1 sample	..	..	13	0
1 „	..	..	10	10
1 „	..	..	17	0
2 samples	..	..	25	0
2 „	..	..	35	0
3 „	..	..	90	0

The Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company took 100 samples from the main water supply in various parts of the area during the year. These were all of “excellent” or “satisfactory” bacteriological quality, except in 4 cases, which were the subject of check samples proving satisfactory. These 4 cases of poor quality samples referred to spring supplies taken over by the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company which may be subject to surface pollution during heavy rain.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The main settlement groups in the two principal valleys of the North Tyne and Rede have been provided with works of sewerage and sewage disposal :

Local	Bellingham	}	Operational
Authority	Woodburn		
	Wark		
	Birtley		
	Otterburn		
	Kirkwhelpington		
	Ridsdale :		Nearing completion

The question of adequate maintenance of sewage works will require consideration. Due to the travelling involved between the various works, a staff of two men does not afford adequate time and labour at each of the works for proper maintenance.

Forestry Commission	Kielder Butteryhaugh Stonehaugh Byrness Lewisburn Camping Site	} Operational
Northumberland County Council	Brownrigg Camp School	} Operational

Private Septic Tanks

A further 4 treatment plants have been installed.

HOUSING

Housing (Financial Provisions) Act 1958, as amended by the House Purchase & Housing Act 1959, Housing Act 1961 and Housing Act 1964

Works of improvement on 19 dwellinghouses were made during the year by Discretionary grants. The improvements to such properties were made possible by financial assistance, including the provision to each house of a bathroom, hot and cold water system, inside w.c., and a drainage system with means of sewage disposal.

No applications were received during the year for Standard grants.

It is worth recording that, to date, the total number of houses approved for grant-aid since the inception of the scheme is 247.

The average cost per house for effecting works of improvement, as distinct from repairs, amounted to £784.

This means that 247 houses have amenities comparable with that of a new dwelling, and the legislation provides invaluable assistance as a deterrent against the tendency of depopulation and supplements local authority building to its advantage.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

Systematic cleansing of the villages and properties along the route has been maintained. The areas covered are :

Bellingham	Wark	Ridsdale
Reedsmouth	Stonehaugh	Great Bavington
Greenhaugh	Birtley	Little Bavington
Kirkharle	Falstone	Rochester
Kirkwhelpington	Kielder	Otterburn
Byrness	East Woodburn	West Woodburn

Tips. There are eight tips in the area situate at :

Otterburn	Falstone	Stonehaugh
Hareshaw	Kielder	Byrness
Woodburn	Knowesgate	

The present service, operated by two vehicles, has reached its limit and any additional request for refuse collection is considered on its merits.

Employees : 2 loader-drivers and 3 loaders.

Tonnage : 3,028 tons.

The cost of such service is 8.954d. in the £.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

One operator is in the employ of the Council and methods of treatment are those approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Treatments :

Sewers : Regular and systematic treating in Bellingham, Woodburn, Wark, Birtley and Otterburn.

Farms and Business Premises	..	1	
Tips..	.. .. .	3	
Other properties	.. .. .	4	Total .. 8

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1958 Meat Inspection Regulations, 1963

There are five butchers in the area — three operate slaughterhouses and two buy carcase meat. 100% meat inspection is maintained. 10 Slaughterman's licences have been issued.

Analysis of inspection is as under :

Cattle including cows	..	..	263
Pigs	..	..	8
Sheep and Lambs	..	..	755
Total	..	..	1,026

Condemned :

Carcase of which some part or organ
was condemned

Bovine *Sheep*

16 Nil

Percentage of numbers inspected
affected with disease other than
tuberculosis and cysticerci ..

5.7 Nil

Other foods examined and found unfit for human
consumption :—

1. Meat at slaughterhouses	..	..	Weight (lbs.)	68
2. Bacon	..	..	..	52
3. Canned Meats	..	..	Tins	2
4. Fish	..	..	..	4
5. Fruit and Vegetables	..	..	..	7
6. Other Foods	..	..	..	23

FOOD HYGIENE (GENERAL) REGULATIONS, 1960

Some 56 premises in the area come within the scope of this legislation. Regular and systematic inspection is maintained.

Food Premises : The following are the types of food premises in the district :

Bakeries	..	..	..	2
Butchers	..	..	..	5
Cafes	..	..	..	7
Clubs	..	..	..	4
General Dealers (Grocers, etc.)	..	..	..	18
Public Houses and Hotels	..	..	..	11
School Kitchens	..	..	..	9

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Two cases were reported where nuisances through pollution were caused. Informal representation resolved these problems.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

Registration has covered the following classification :—

Offices.. .. .	8
Retail Shops	25
Catering Establishments	10
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	1

Systematic and regular inspection is effected and progress made to implement this legislation.

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED

	By Informal Action	By Statutory Notice	Total
SANITARY CONVENIENCES :			
Privies and privy ashpits abolished ..	5	—	5
Water closets provided	19	—	19
Number of above for which grant was given (P.H.A. 1936, Sec. 47)	1	—	1
Sanitary bins provided	17	—	17
DRAINAGE :			
New drains constructed	45	—	45
Drains repaired or reconstructed	27	—	27
Additional gullies provided	150	—	150
Old gullies replaced	17	—	17
Scullery sinks provided	18	—	18
Scullery waste pipes repaired	4	—	4
Scullery waste pipes trapped	7	—	7
Yards repaired or reconstructed	15	—	15

INSPECTIONS AND VISITS

Housing :

Demolition	27
Improvements and Repairs	476
Verminous premises	1
Water Supply	57
Drainage	348
Factories and Workshops	51
Licensed Premises	176
Refuse Collection and Disposal	381
Rodent Control	48
Infectious Disease	15
Slaughterhouses	507
Shops	227
Fishmongers (vans)	10
Bakeries	61

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

Part I of the Act.

I.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector)

PREMISES (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	12	17	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	18	31	—	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) ...	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	30	48	—	—

II.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more “cases”).

PARTICULARS (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of Cleanliness (S. 1.) ...	5	5	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S. 2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S. 3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S. 4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S. 6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7)					
(a) Insufficient	2	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work ...	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	7	7	—	—	—

Part VII of the Act. Sections 110 and 111.**Outwork.**

This part is not applicable to this Rural Area.

To the Chairman of the Council, the Chairman and Members of the Health & Housing Committee, Dr. J. M. McEwan and members of the staff I express my thanks for the support rendered throughout the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

S. CLOUGH,

Chief Public Health Inspector & Surveyor.

